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## WASHINGTON TALK

# Briefing

### *A Short, Quick Ally*

Reagan Administration officials apparently thought they had a new ally in their campaign to persuade Congress to appropriate an additional \$21 million in aid for the Nicaraguan rebels. The first draft of an Administration report, "Nicaragua's Military Buildup and Support for Central American Subversion," quoted Senator Joseph R. Biden Jr., a Delaware Democrat who serves on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, as having said in a Senate speech late on the night of June 18:

"On the basis of my review of this intelligence, I am, in fact, convinced of the accuracy of many of the Administration's statements about military information. I will attest that the accumulation of intelligence information does show that Nicaragua is deeply involved in providing arms, command and control support and safe haven to Salvadoran guerrilla groups."

After the draft report began circulating around Capitol Hill, Senator Biden complained to State Department officials that his words had been taken out of context and that he was opposed to further aid to the Nicaraguan rebels. The final draft, just released, deletes the Biden comments.

William E. Farrell  
Marjorie Hunter